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Enabling the rural poor
to overcome poverty

Cooperation agreement with the International Food Policy Research Institute

Executive Board — Ninetieth Session
Rome, 17-18 April 2007

For: **Approval**

Note to Executive Board Directors

This document is submitted for approval by the Executive Board.

To make the best use of time available at Executive Board sessions, Directors are invited to contact the following focal point with any technical questions about this document before the session:

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Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to authorize the President of IFAD to negotiate and finalize a cooperation agreement with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The purpose of said cooperation agreement would be to provide a general orientation document for future cooperative efforts aimed at capitalizing on IFAD's and IFPRI's respective comparative advantages in the realms of policy research, policy dialogue, and support to the implementation of food and agricultural policies that benefit the rural poor in developing countries.

Cooperation agreement with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

1. The Executive Board is invited to note that IFAD intends to enter into a cooperation agreement with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
2. In accordance with article 8, section 2, of the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the Board is requested to authorize the President of IFAD to negotiate and finalize a cooperation agreement with IFPRI along the lines of similar agreements signed by IFAD with other institutions. The text of the agreement as negotiated and concluded will be submitted to the Board for information at a subsequent session.
3. Relevant information on IFPRI and the purpose of the agreement is provided in the annex.

International Food Policy Research Institute

Establishment

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) was established in 1975 as one of 15 agricultural research centres under the umbrella of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The institute receives funding from governments (on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis), regional organizations, international and United Nations agencies, and private foundations, mostly within the framework of the CGIAR.

Activities

The mission of the CGIAR is "to achieve sustainable food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through scientific research and research-related activities in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, policy, and environment." In this context, IFPRI works to identify policy solutions to hunger and malnutrition worldwide. This focus is based on two key premises, namely that sound public policies are essential for sustainable food security and nutritional improvement, and that research and the dissemination of its results can play a key role in enhancing sound policy processes in support of food security. As a result, IFPRI's priorities include:

- (a) identifying and analysing alternative policies for improved food security and nutrition, with an emphasis on low-income countries and poor people, and on effective natural resource management in agricultural practices;
- (b) strengthening the capacity of people and of institutions involved in food policy research in developing countries; and
- (c) engaging in policy communication, making research results available to all parties in a position to use such information and supporting them in linking research to policy action.

The cornerstones of IFPRI's work are research, policy communication, and capacity strengthening for policy and research. All related activities are undertaken in partnership with other research centres, universities, public organizations, and the private sector in developing countries and elsewhere. The aim is to combine research with a continuous effort to develop the capacity of "researchers, policymakers, trainers, practitioners, administrators, extension workers, students, community leaders, and others" to produce, adapt, and use research-based knowledge for food policy.

According to its 2005 strategy, the three key thematic areas for IFPRI's current and future research are:

- (a) constraints and opportunities for more efficient and inclusive global food, nutritional and agricultural systems;
- (b) policies that may improve governance of these systems, e.g. by enhancing political participation and strengthening institutions that support pro-poor food, agriculture, and natural resource management systems; and
- (c) policies that may foster scientific, technological and institutional innovation benefiting the poor in developing countries, in the context of comprehensive food and agricultural strategies.

Governance

IFPRI is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees, and operates under the umbrella of the CGIAR. Its current Director General is Dr Joachim von Braun.

Structure

IFPRI's structure includes five main research divisions respectively focusing on environment and production technology; food consumption and nutrition; international

service for national agricultural research; markets, trade and institutions; and development strategy and governance. IFPRI's headquarters is located in Washington D.C. and it has regional offices in China, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, India and Uganda.

Objectives of IFPRI-IFAD cooperation

The proposed cooperation between IFAD and IFPRI concerns strategic policy issues related to agricultural and rural development for poverty reduction, stemming from the common commitment of the two institutions to work for a world free of hunger and poverty. The goal is to capitalize on IFAD's and IFPRI's respective comparative advantages in the realms of policy research, policy dialogue, and support to the implementation of food and agricultural policies that benefit the rural poor in developing countries. The thematic issues on which the partnership will focus have been identified through consultations between the parties. These will be further informed by operational issues (such as problems, solutions and innovations) emerging from IFAD programmes. In the framework of the agreement, IFPRI will assist IFAD in accessing policy-oriented research of relevance to IFAD and will supply original policy research identified during consultations with IFAD. On its part, IFAD will facilitate IFPRI's access to programme and project experiences and foster field research environments for relevant learning through applied research and feedback to implementing actors and partners. The partnership will significantly reduce the transaction costs associated with ad hoc collaboration between IFAD and IFPRI. In addition, it will greatly strengthen IFAD's ability to engage in sound, research-based policy dialogue in its programmes, in line with the current strategic orientation of the Fund towards more effective policy work on behalf of the rural poor.

The main thematic areas of cooperation will include:

- (a) policies for good governance and sustainable management of water, soil, and other natural resources for rural poverty reduction;
- (b) the role of public institutions in food and agricultural systems, strengthening leadership in agricultural organizations, and cooperation with and capacity-building of farmers' organizations;
- (c) supporting innovation and rural innovators, with a focus on enabling policies and institutions, including experimentation with distance education in food and agriculture;
- (d) linking small farmers (especially women) and rural communities to markets and investigating the role of market and trade policy, infrastructure and information for pro-poor rural transformation;
- (e) enhancing the productivity of the smallholder farm sector for pro-poor development, with a focus on the role of science and technology policy and programmes;
- (f) investigating the challenges and opportunities facing indigenous peoples in farming (notably in relation to access rights), and also the policies and programmes for participatory and integrative approaches to addressing these challenges and opportunities;
- (g) experimentation in projects and innovation in project design; and
- (h) developing communication packages for the dissemination, adaptation and implementation of innovative solutions to policy issues of operational relevance.